



PUBLIC NOTICE

US Army
Corps
of Engineers
Baltimore
District

In Reply to Application Number
CENAB-OP-RMN(MD MPA/COX CREEK DREDGED
MATERIAL CONTAINMENT FACILITY/PIER,
BRIDGE & DRED)03-62135-1

Comment Period: 14 May 2003 to 4 June 2003

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PUBLIC NOTICE IS TO SOLICIT COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE WORK DESCRIBED BELOW. AT THIS TIME, NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE AS TO WHETHER OR NOT A PERMIT WILL BE ISSUED.

The Baltimore District has received an application for a Department of the Army permit pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C 1344) State authorization pursuant to the Tidal Wetlands Act and/or Nontidal Wetlands Protection Act, as described below:

APPLICANT: *Maryland Port Administration*
Attn: *Frank Hamons*
2310 Broening Highway
Baltimore, MD 21224

LOCATION: Patapsco River, Anne Arundel County, Maryland

WORK: The applicant proposes to hydraulically or mechanically dredge an 1,800-foot-long by 250-foot-wide access channel, an 800-foot-diameter turning basin, and a berthing area to 18 feet below mean low water, and to deposit the approximately 279,000 cubic yards of dredged material at the previously-authorized Cox Creek disposal site. A permit for this project would authorize periodic maintenance dredging for ten years, subject to the prior notification of the District Engineer. The applicant also proposes to construct a pier with an access trestle and to install excavators on the pier. None of this work to extend more than 170 feet channelward of the mean high water shoreline. The purpose of the project is to provide a facility of unloading dredged material into a disposal site.

All work is to be completed in accordance with the enclosed plan(s). If you have any questions concerning this matter, please call Mr. Jon Romeo of this office at (410) 962-6079.

Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Assessment: The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Act (MSFCMA), as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-267), requires all Federal agencies to consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service on all actions, or proposed actions, permitted, funded, or undertaken by the agency that may adversely affect EFH. The EFH designations within the Northeast Region (Maine to Virginia), dated March 1, 1999, include EFH for a number of species in various life stages. A review of the appropriate literature indicates that this waterway has EFH listed for juvenile and adult windowpane flounder (Scopthalmus aquosus) summer flounder (Paralichthys dentatus), bluefish (Pomatomus saxatilis), and egg, larva, juvenile, and adult life stages of king mackerel (Scomberomorus cavalla), Spanish mackerel (Scomberomorus maculatus), cobia (Rachycentron canadum), and red drum (Sciaenops ocellatus). These are managed species under the MSFCMA. A preliminary assessment indicates that the proposed project may have an adverse affect on EFH based on the impacts associated with the proposed dredging. The aforementioned species are not estuarine resident species but could use the project area as a foraging area and as a nursery area on a seasonal basis, primarily during the summer. The project has the potential to adversely affect the managed species and/or their EFH quality and/or quantity, and their prey species. No EFH measures have been developed for this project. As the evaluation of this project continues, EFH measures may be developed.

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

The applicant is required to obtain a water quality certification in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act from the Maryland Department of the Environment. Any written comments concerning the work described above which relate to water quality certification must be received by the Standards and Certification Division Maryland Department of the Environment, Montgomery Park Business Center, 1800 Washington Boulevard, Suite 430, Baltimore Maryland 21230-1708 within the comment period as specified above to receive consideration. Written comments concerning the work described above related to the factors listed above or other pertinent factors must be received by the District Engineer, US Army Corps of Engineers Baltimore District, PO Box 1715, Baltimore, Maryland 21203-1715, within the comment period as specified above to receive consideration. The 401 certifying agency has a statutory limit of one year to make its decision.

The applicant must obtain any State or local government permits which may be required.

A preliminary review of this application indicates that the proposed work will not affect listed species or their critical habitat pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act as amended. As the evaluation of this application continues, additional information may become available which could modify this preliminary determination.

Review of the latest published version of the National Register of Historic Places indicates that no registered properties listed as eligible for inclusion therein are located at the site of the proposed work. Currently unknown archeological, scientific, prehistoric, or historical data may be lost or destroyed by the work to be accomplished under the requested permit.

The evaluation of the impact of the work described above on the public interest will include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, under authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Any person who has an interest which may be adversely affected by the issuance of this permit may request a public hearing. The request, which must be in writing, must be received by the District Engineer, US Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, PO Box 1715, Baltimore, Maryland 21203-1715, within the comment period as specified as above to receive consideration. Also, it must clearly state forth the interest which may be adversely affected by this activity in the manner in which the interest may be adversely affected.

It is requested that you communicate the foregoing information concerning the proposed work to any persons known by you to be interested and not being known to this office, who did not receive a copy of this notice.